

Environmental Justice

Spring 2006



“No person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.”

-Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964

Environmental Justice

A 1994 Presidential Order directed every Federal Agency to make environmental justice part of its mission by identifying and addressing the effects of all programs, policies, and activities on “minority and low-income populations.” Reinforcing the message of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, it ensured that every federally funded project nationwide consider the human environment in the planning and decision making process.

SCAG’s Environmental Justice Policy

As the Metropolitan Planning Organization for six Southern California counties, pursuing and developing solutions to transportation, housing, air quality and other regional issues, SCAG has developed a policy that ensures that environmental justice principles are integral to all planning processes. SCAG:

- analyzes its programs to determine their impact on the environment, health & safety, and economy of all the region’s residents.
- provides early and meaningful public participation in decision-making processes.
- seeks out and considers input from traditionally underrepresented groups.

- considers alternative approaches or proposes mitigating measures when disproportionately high and adverse impacts on low- income or minority populations are identified.

- evaluates and responds, as needed, to environmental justice issues that arise during the implementation of regional plans.

Environmental Justice and the 2004 RTP

SCAG evaluated *Destination 2030*, the 2004 Regional Transportation Plan, to determine if implementation would result in disproportionate adverse impacts on low-income, minority, elderly or disabled populations. SCAG also conducted an extensive outreach program, soliciting input and feedback from all parts of the region.

Areas analyzed included:

- total public plan expenditures
- accessibility to jobs and services
- time savings: taxes paid
- highway and aviation noise
- air pollutant emissions

SCAG’s analysis found no disproportionate impact in most areas. Aviation and highway noise do fall disproportionately on low-income and minority residents, but these impacts will be alleviated with plan implementation.

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Or visit the SCAG website at: www.scag.ca.gov